

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

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ADA CONFERENCE HELD IN JUNE

More than 300 representatives of employers, unions, and human rights bodies in Canada and the United States gathered at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, June 4, for a Commission-sponsored seminar on the problems of the older worker. It was the first gathering of its kind sponsored by a government agency in Canada.

The seminar, organized by the Commission's Age Discrimination Division, heard Ontario Labour Minister Dalton Bales give a broad outline of the Age Discrimination Act, passed by the province 4 years ago to protect workers between 40 and 65.

Mr. Bales promised a "searching look" at the legislation, including exploration of special retraining programs for senior employees; an anti-reprisal clause in the Act; and a research project to study patterns of hiring practices as they affect older workers.

"The fact that all A.D.A. cases but one have been settled without a public Board of Inquiry testifies to the co-operation we have received", the Minister said. The Commission has processed more than 400 cases since the Act was passed in 1966.

RESEARCH PROJECT UNDERWAY AT DOWNTOWN OFFICE

A research project designed to assess the impact on the community of Services For Working People — a storefront office in downtown Toronto sponsored and staffed by the Commission in co-operation with other branches of the Ontario Department of Labour — is currently being conducted by a team from the University of Toronto School of Social Work.


The research group is headed by Dr. A. Rose, who is being assisted by Dr. J. Gandy and Dr. C. Lambert, and includes researchers Mrs. R. Tepperman, Miss D. Newman, Miss C. Avery and R. Grossman. Herb Sohn, formerly Assistant Director of the Commission, who is now on a leave of absence to pursue doctoral studies at the School of Social Work, is also working with the team.

The storefront office was opened on an experimental basis last year. Since then, its staff of officers and interpreters has handled more than 4,000 complaints.

Most queries, predominantly from recent arrivals to Canada, revolve around unemployment, continuing education, legal assistance, housing, human rights, welfare, and employment standards.

COMMISSION EXPANDS SERVICES

A major expansion of Commission services is currently underway. In the Northern Region, three new officers have been hired to staff the Thunder Bay office, including Willie John, fluent in Ojibwa. The others are Cuyler Cotton, and Ruth Tracy, the latter a former lecturer in anthropology at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay.



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Eastern Region, centered in Ottawa, is sending staff on a periodic basis to handle complaints and conduct educational programs in Kingston and Cornwall, and the Metro Toronto region will shortly be serving the Hamilton and Kitchener areas of the province. Recent additions to the Toronto headquarters staff are Gwen Davis, B.A. in English from the University of Toronto, and Julie Javor, B.A. in Psychology from the same university.

Summer students working for the Commission are Jo-Anne Grayson, Ian O'Dell, Esther Kulman, Beverly Sabourin, Rene Charpentier, Judy Girard, and Helen Blum.

COMMISSION CASE DISMISSED AGAINST FORD MOTOR COMPANY

A Board of Inquiry into the complaint of Keith Simms, a black Jamaican, has dismissed charges of discrimination in employment matters against the Ford Motor Company of Canada Ltd. (Ontario Truck Plant) in Oakville. The opinion of Board Chairman Professor Horace Krever was that derogatory name-calling in and of itself was not covered by the Code and — in Mr. Simms' case — was not the primary or significant cause of his difficulties with the company.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION IN LEDER CASE

A recommendation has been handed down by Board of Inquiry chairman Dean Walter Tarnopolsky of the University of Windsor Faculty of Law in the case of Mrs. P. Amber (complainant) vs. Mr. and Mrs. M. Leder (respondents). Mrs. Amber alleged she was denied rental of an apartment on the basis of her race and colour.

Mr. Leder acknowledged contravention of the Code before the Board Chairman. Subsequently it was agreed by all parties that the complainant be given an apology and offered suitable accommodation plus \$461.00 for expenses incurred as a result of the incident.

BOARDS OF INQUIRY

Since January, the Commission has appointed eleven Boards of Inquiry to conduct public hearings into complaints of alleged violations of the Ontario Human Rights Code. All were the result of housing cases, except K. Simms vs. Ford Motor Company, an employment case. Eight arose out of situations in Toronto; the others were in Oakville, Kitchener, and Windsor.

Four cases were settled prior to scheduled Board hearings, and one was dismissed. Of the four Boards held, one was dismissed (see Ford case above), one was settled (see Leder case above), and decisions are pending in two. Two Boards have not yet been held.

Board hearings are open to the public. Place and time of each may be obtained from the Commission.

FIELD OFFICES BUSY

All regional offices are contacting resort operators and personnel in their areas during the tourist season to make them familiar with the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code, especially as it relates to public accommodation. Contact is made through mailings and personal visits to resorts. In addition, the Commission has taped radio messages beamed at tourists and owners of public places, has advertised in the media, and has distributed educational materials widely to make sure tourists are informed of their rights.

The Northern office is participating with the Employment Standards Branch of the provincial Department of Labour in visits to remote Northern areas to investigate the employment conditions of Indian workers.

Eastern Region is initiating seminars this summer with public and high school teachers in the Ottawa area to discuss human rights problems.

The Southwestern office in Windsor is currently working with employers and unions to implement specific recommendations made by the 1969 Windsor Advisory Committee on Employment in its report to the Minister of Labour last year.

Staff from the Metro Toronto office are currently visiting Indian reserves in the area and meeting with Indian leaders to determine the needs of the Indian community.

COMMISSION CASELOAD STATISTICS SHOW SLIGHT RISE

Statistics compiled thus far for 1970 have shown a slight rise in the number of cases being handled by the Commission.

From January to May, 222 formal complaints were registered, compared to 220 for the same period during the preceding year.

An additional 56 informal complaints were filed, bringing the total caseload figure for the eight months to 278.

Of the 222 formal cases, 106 were filed under the Age Discrimination Act; 86 dealt with employment discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code; 21 with housing; and 9 with public accommodation.

Blacks comprise the largest complainant group, accounting for about 60% of all cases. There was a significant rise in complaints reported by Canadian Indians and East Indians.

HUMAN RIGHTS FILMS AVAILABLE FOR SHOWING TO PUBLIC

The Commission has twenty-two films dealing with human rights and minority group themes available for showings to the public by staff personnel. Organizations and other interested parties can obtain a list of the films and arrange bookings with the Commission.

